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Press Release

August 11, 2005

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ATTORNEY GENERAL MCGRAW AWARDS \$150,000 TO THE PARTNERSHIP OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES AND THE WEST VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS COMMUNITY HEALTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT.

Attorney General Darrell McGraw today announced a \$150,000 award to be given to the Partnership of African American Churches (PAAC) and the West Virginia Council of Churches to mobilize local communities to assist individuals in taking more responsibility for their own health and well-being. The Partnership of African American Churches will use the funds to support and train community coordinators to educate the community on relevant health issues; conduct pharmacy remediation reviews; and lead their community in healthy living. This will include, but not be limited to, programmatic implementation in physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco control.

The Partnership of African American Churches is a specific initiatives-driven 501 3 (C) organization dealing with education, economic, health and crime prevention issues. The PAAC has extensive experience in utilizing grassroots efforts to seek solutions to chronic health problems in the African American Community in West Virginia.

With the funds presented today, PAAC in collaboration with the West Virginia Council of Churches will form a three-way partnership between the government, health care experts, and members of the community to form a grassroots community-based outreach program to educate members of the African American community on health and well-being.

Reverend James Patterson, President of the Partnership of African American Churches, states: "Communities are willing to accept their share of responsibility necessary to improve their own health and well-being. However, they must be given the opportunity to become equal partners in the process. This will require funding agencies to deviate from their standard procedure of funding institutions on behalf of communities and funding communities directly. Such a positive step will move the control for initiative identification from the institution to the community and ultimately lead to increased community engagement."

Attorney General McGraw added, "Although this funding comes from the work product of a the Attorney General's office, it is administered directly to members of our community by their fellow citizens through the works of the Partnership of African American Churches." "This represents a direct link between the government and its people." McGraw added.

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